



Senator Moore, Representative Luxenburg, Senator Sampson, Representative Scott and members of the Housing Committee:

State Marshals are sworn public officials responsible for enforcing civil court orders, including evictions. State Marshals are the most acquainted and knowledgeable about the actual eviction removal processes.

This is testimony on S.B 4 *AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S PRESENT AND FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS*, specifically on Sections 5 and 6 on the bill.

Section 6. It is common practice that residential evictions are not conducted during the last two weeks of December into the New Year. This currently comes about through a combination of factors. Marshals generally do not schedule eviction moves during the holidays. Most municipalities have both unwritten and written policies to the same effect by not accepting items for storage. Finally, it is our experience that some landlords hold off on moves in December.

Should the General Assembly place a ban on evictions in the first quarter of the year, that dynamic in December will likely disappear. There could be an explosion of landlords seeking to do eviction moves in the month of December, and again April.

This bill will have a direct impact on the State Marshal system, creating an annual log jam in the system. More eviction moves will be requested in a concentrated period than can reasonably be conducted. Currently State Marshals generally can turn around an eviction move from the notice to removal in about 10 days to 3 weeks, due to normal scheduling and logistic constraints. It could be expected that if eviction moves were to be stopped entirely for 3 months, the time frame for a plaintiff to get an eviction judgment enforced by a marshal could grow to 2 to 3 months or more, perhaps delaying some evictions from occurring until May or June. A spring influx of evictions could also cause challenges for the municipal storage.

There is also the possibility that landlords will seek race to enforce their eviction judgments in December before the ban starts. This could place stresses on the State Marshals to do moves during the holidays before the ban begins, when it is not common practice currently to do moves in late December. More people could get evicted around the holidays than is normal practice. Either way, this bill will place a stress on the State Marshal's workflow around the holidays and in the springtime.

State Marshals income is derived from a stable flow of legal process. State Marshals are public officials, but they are compensated for eviction moves and legal process on a fee-for-service basis set by statutory fees. Creating unpredictability in our marshal's income will impact 175 marshals who do this work for the State of Connecticut.

Section 5. Similarly, there are challenges for the State Marshal system by placing a moratorium on the service of notices to quit for the first quarter of the year. This would significantly impact state marshals. The service of notices to quit are relied upon by marshals, in part, for their income. These notices are the first step in the eviction process. They are the prerequisite step for the later service of an eviction summons. Not every notice to quit leads to an eviction case. Some notices are effectively used as rent reminders, and landlord does not pursue further action.

Should the General Assembly adopt such restrictions, it would cause a very significant log jam in the State Marshal's operations in the months of December and April and cause a problem in the winter months for marshals.

Also, there seems to be an inconsistency in the prohibitions—notice to quit and eviction moves are banned, but service of summary process summons and service of the execution notice would be allowed. Should this moratorium be adopted, clarifying language should be included to direct the State Marshal Commission to provide instructions and guidance to State Marshals on their obligations and requirements under any such moratorium.

Our State Marshals take their involvement in evictions very seriously. We must also rely on the general predictability and steady flow of legal process to make a living. This bill would interrupt the stability of the State Marshal system.